

Attitude: the new skill now recognized in sport

Education 4 Peace, a Swiss foundation based in Rolle, publishes its innovative first educational book « Master of your Emotions », in collaboration with the UEFA. This book puts attitude as the 5th essential skill in sport, adding to physical, technical, tactical and mental skills.

Written to stimulate curiosity and to motivate young sportspersons, parents and teachers, this book provides practical information on our relationship with our emotions, our thoughts, and how to keep self-control and communicate while dealing with difficult situations. **The guideline of this book is *listening*, the open door to self-awareness, and relationships with others.**

Resulting from five years of research and practice, one of this book's aims is to provoke new approaches and initiatives within sports, based on self-awareness, well-being, and emotional health. It is also hoped that it will reduce violence in the football world.

It will at first be **available in a digital version** (for iPad and Anrdoid), both in French and in English. The first part will be available for download, free of charge, until December 31, 2013. It is planned to publish a hard copy in 2014. This first book has been written primarily for the football world. A multi-sport publication is currently under production.

*The E4P Foundation will be at **Didacta Suisse**, the Swiss exhibition of education and training, held in Lausanne from November 20th to 22nd , 2013 www.didacta-lausanne.ch. Conference and presentation of the book by Mark Milton, E4P founder, will take place on November 21st, at 4PM.*

History of Education 4 Peace Foundation

Founded in 2002, Education 4 Peace (E4P) is a non-for-profit Swiss Foundation. Its vocation is to promote self-awareness, well-being, and emotional health, for the new generation's education. E4P works on an international scale. In 2007 it co-initiated, with the support of the WHO, the first international congress on emotional health.

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Introduction

Education 4 Peace, a Swiss foundation, in co-operation with UEFA, launches today a new and innovative book, “Master of Your Emotions”. The main reason of publishing this book is, as Mark Milton, founder of the organization said today in the House of International Sport in Lausanne, to introduce attitude as an essential skill in sports, where there is hardly any discussion of the topic. One of the objectives of the book is to stimulate new approaches and initiatives centred on self-awareness, well being and emotional health in the field of sports. The Foundation sees that in the rapidly growing world of developing self-awareness, the sports environment is going to be an important field for the transmission of this new dimension of education for the next generations. Working at the global level for over 10 years, this has become one of the main missions of the Foundation. E4P today works at two levels: with leaders and decision makers concerning the future of education (conferences, forums, strategic projects with partners) and with grassroots, supporting and contributing to specific projects and programmes through trainings.

History of E4P

E4P was created and founded in Lausanne in 2002 as a non for profit Foundation, its origins and first mission was to promote listening skills in society based upon Mr Milton’s previous experience with international suicide prevention programmes. In 2004 the work of the Foundation evolved towards international projects, E4P co-initiated in

2007 the first international congress on the theme of emotional health supported by the World Health Organization. In 2008 E4P started focusing on sports, and in particular football in collaboration with UEFA where the Foundation became a social partner for 5 years, giving trainings all over Europe. The Foundation experimented many of their tools and approaches with football clubs to make them more concrete in the football world. That led them to collect and develop a wide knowledge and deep understanding how this approach can be applied in concrete cases and through concrete tools.

“Attitude” as the 5th skill

After 2 years collaboration with UEFA, the main purpose of the “Master of Your Emotions” project became to communicate and advocate the message that “attitude” is the new skill in sports, and in particular in football. E4P sees that attitude or behaviour should become a fully-fledged skill in sports, not only on the performance level, but also on the social level. All sports should introduce this skill. Based upon this vision, E4P found it would be useful to create a reference tool which has the intention to inspire and motivate youth as well as adults to know more about themselves. It intends to be an integrative tool, opening to many different approaches that stimulate creativity and multiple initiatives. That led the Foundation to create the book “Master of Your Emotions” in which role models can help to convey the message of the importance of this new skill. UEFA has also agreed with the launch of the book that attitude should be the fifth skill in football (besides physical, technical, tactical and mental skills).

The book

The book is composed of 3 parts, each part with 3 chapters. The first part which is freely downloadable until the end of the year, is a general introduction created to motivate young people and adults to know more about themselves and invite them to read the rest of the book. The second part is dedicated to youth, giving practical information of how emotions work, self- and thought-awareness and conscious communication; how we can become the master of our emotions rather than them mastering us. The third part is dedicated to parents and coaches: teaching today, respectful communication for well-being and performance, teaching with respect to teach respect.

The red thread of the book is listening: to learn how to listen, to oneself and others, which is the opening door to self-awareness and to our relations. The book was written so that a young person (10-12 years old) understands it and whatever approach a teacher, a parent or the coach has, there are examples in the book to support multiple approaches, such as non-violent communication, physical awareness (breathing, internal listening) or mindfulness (calmness, concentration, capacity of observation).

The authors and editors also took it seriously that youth today need access through the digital world, and get straight to the information they are looking for. Therefore today E4P launched the digital version of the book for tablets (iPad and Android) in two languages, French and English, other means (hard copy editions) will be developed in

2014. The tablet version is interactive and it is bringing an innovation: there is direct access to over 30 themes and 60 exercises in the book. After a training or a match, if for example we want to know about anger and select that topic, the book automatically selects those pages that are linked to that specific theme. Besides the complete digital version of the book, the Foundation is also making accessible and downloadable the first part (the first three chapters) of the book for free until 31st of December 2013. Price of the complete download is CHF 10 (EUR 8.99).

The future

As to future plans of the Foundation, more and more clubs are highlighting values just as many organisations in the world do. For that E4P developed a concept that clubs, federations, schools and associations, have the opportunity to personalize and customize the “Master of Your Emotions” book for their own purpose, message and audience, by adding their own branding, pictures and testimonials to the content. It is intended to become a ‘sports social responsibility’ visit card.

Moreover E4P develops pilot projects and trainings with larger clubs. Mr Milton announced that a pilot project is in process with the Arsenal football Club Foundation. It will involve children between 9-10 years old, and a special project with their partner, “Freedom from Torture”, which is for adults.

On the longer run, E4P is going to enter further markets with the book and its applications (UK, Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, etc), together with creating a multi-sports version of the book that is already in development.

Connected to the launch of the book, E4P has also put online a survey (www.e4p.org) to allow people to give their vision on the evolution of education for the next generations, with questions around self-awareness and well-being. The survey takes less than 10 minutes to fill.

E4P will also be present at Didacta, the first education fair in the French part of Switzerland, being held in Lausanne on November 20-22, where people can meet them. They will also organize a major conference and debate on tomorrow’s education there with the famous writer Thomas d’Ansembourg on November 21st at 7 pm, entitled “Education and attitude, what role for tomorrow’s school?” with appr. 500 people.

Background information on the importance of self-awareness in sports

There are many different tools and approaches today which invite to self-discovery. 15 years ago this topic was still very “psychological”, or belonging to the world of self-development and therapy. Since a few years these skills, competencies, have been more and more accessible for a large audience. It started with managers and social skills in the

professional world, and there are more and more examples and projects in the world of bringing this dimension of education to children. It can be called values-based education, mindfulness, social-emotional learning or contemplative education. Where they all converge is about knowing more about the self and how we can respond to triggering situation in a life-serving way for others and ourselves.

After giving trainings in several European countries for two years, E4P's conclusion was the following:

- 1) The football world (coaches, parents, children, youngsters) has a general interest in exploring attitudes as a skill or competency to develop.
- 2) Sports in general is an amazing field for developing these types of skills or competencies: emotions are always present (competition is about winning and losing, physical contact, happiness, deception, frustration, etc), sports is connected to health, pleasure and leisure and sport teachers, coaches or trainers have a spontaneous interest in the body and the mind.

The Foundation also sees that to be successful in bringing this new education dimension and skill to sport there are some preliminary conditions:

- 1) It must come from the bottom to the top as well as top-down.
- 2) There must be testimonials that this skill enhances performance, too.
- 3) It must be presented and brought to the grassroots as something attractive. To have sport stars as role models to the youth, those who can talk about their experiences and what they learnt. And to use the communication (format and tools) the youth is using today.
- 4) For youth in particular, it is important that it is brought as a new skill, something that their parents are also discovering; youngsters are the future masters. It requests humility from adults: it is not a discipline we can control, we learn it with children and it is a life-long learning process.

There is, however, an open question: there are two possible fields for introducing emotional health into sports – sports in school and in outside school activities, such as sports clubs. Where it will spring out, we do not know yet. Sports in clubs seems to be a more flexible environment, while bringing change to schools can be more difficult. The advantage of school, on the other hand, is that it touches the whole field of education. It is an opportunity for school sports teachers to add self-awareness the curriculum, as it touches performance and well-being through developing presence and concentration.